

# the **Shrewsbury Connection**

## A Welcome from the Manager

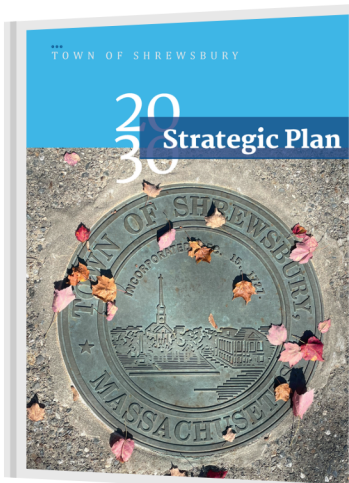
Welcome to the First Edition of *The Shrewsbury Connection* - a quarterly newsletter on all things Shrewsbury! On behalf of myself, the Office of the Town Manager, and the Select Board, I am excited to offer this new way to stay connected - whether folks prefer to read online or in print, the Shrewsbury Connection is our residents' guide to current events and updates in Shrewsbury.



The Town received a lot of feedback during the Strategic Plan process regarding the Town and its communications with the community. Based on survey feedback, in an effort to enhance communications and connections with our residents, we have developed this newsletter.

We will feature new and recurring sections that will provide updates from different areas of the organization like Community Development, Health and Human Services, Public Works, Public Safety, and much more.

We hope residents will find the Shrewsbury Connection informative and engaging. If you have ideas and/or feedback on the content of the newsletter please reach out to Taylor Galusha at [tgalusha@shrewsburyma.gov](mailto:tgalusha@shrewsburyma.gov). Enjoy the First Edition of the Shrewsbury Connection as we work to become a more engaged and connected community.



### Future Ready - Shrewsbury 2030 Strategic Plan

In January 2023, the Shrewsbury Select Board approved the Shrewsbury 2030 Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan aims to align the desires of the community with the work of the Town as an organization - making community engagement and feedback critical to this plan being successful.

The most commonly asked question during the strategic planning process was about how the work of the plan would be implemented. The budget process for Fiscal Year 2024 was centered around the Strategic Plan and the community feedback that came from it. The Town will hold itself accountable to the Strategic Plan and the community through an online tracking software. Visit [www.shrewsburyma.gov/StrategicPlan](http://www.shrewsburyma.gov/StrategicPlan) to learn more.

## WHAT'S INSIDE?

**Department Corner:**  
Office of the Town Clerk

**Select Board**  
Quarterly Highlights

**Department of Public**  
Works Update

**AND MORE!**

## Department Corner – Office of the Town Clerk

Sharyn Thomas, Town Clerk, has a strong team including, Kathleen Thompson, Assistant Town Clerk, Michelle Bowers, Office Assistant, and Kim Dehal, Office Assistant. The Clerk's Office does everything from issuing marriage licenses, issuing the annual town census, and is the primary record keeper for the Town. Many of these services are now offered online through our service request portal at [shrewsburyma.gov](https://shrewsburyma.gov). Day to day you can find the Clerk processing requests for birth and death certificates, verifying voter registration, and assisting with many different records requests. The Clerk's Office also offers notary services for certain document types.

### What does an average day look like for the Office of the Town Clerk?

The time of year drives a bulk of their work – whether it is election season or work on the annual town census. The office assists people at the service counter in Town Hall and serves as an information hub for other Town Departments.

### How can residents vote in the Town of Shrewsbury?

Shrewsbury, like other communities, offers a variety of voting methods for residents including the absentee voting process, vote by mail, in-person early voting for federal and state elections, and regular voting at various polling places in Town.

### What is something you want people to know about your Office?

It is extremely important to fill out your local census each year. The local census keeps you registered as an active voter for the Town and provides an accurate population count. The accurate population count allows our 10 voting precincts to have the correct number of elected Town Meeting Members for our Representative Town Meeting. The annual local census is mailed to each household in January.

### Outdoor Highlight!



The Jordan Pond Walking Trail will soon be a multimodal, accessible pathway, completing a full loop around Jordan Pond! The Town of Shrewsbury has been awarded \$50,000 from the State for the design, engineering, and permitting of the path.

The Town has issued a Request for Proposals for the design of the trail. From there a selection process will occur before construction can begin. Currently, there is a partial trail around the pond that the community can still enjoy while we wait for this new and exciting project to kick off!

If you have questions on this project, please reach out to the Planning and Economic Development Department at [planning@shrewsburyma.gov](mailto:planning@shrewsburyma.gov) or (508) 841-8512!

## Farmers Market and Food Truck Thursdays – 2023 Season!



### FOOD TRUCK THURSDAYS

Scan the QR code to the left for more information on the Food Truck Schedule this year.

Food Trucks are at Town Hall on Thursdays, from 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM!



### FARMERS MARKET

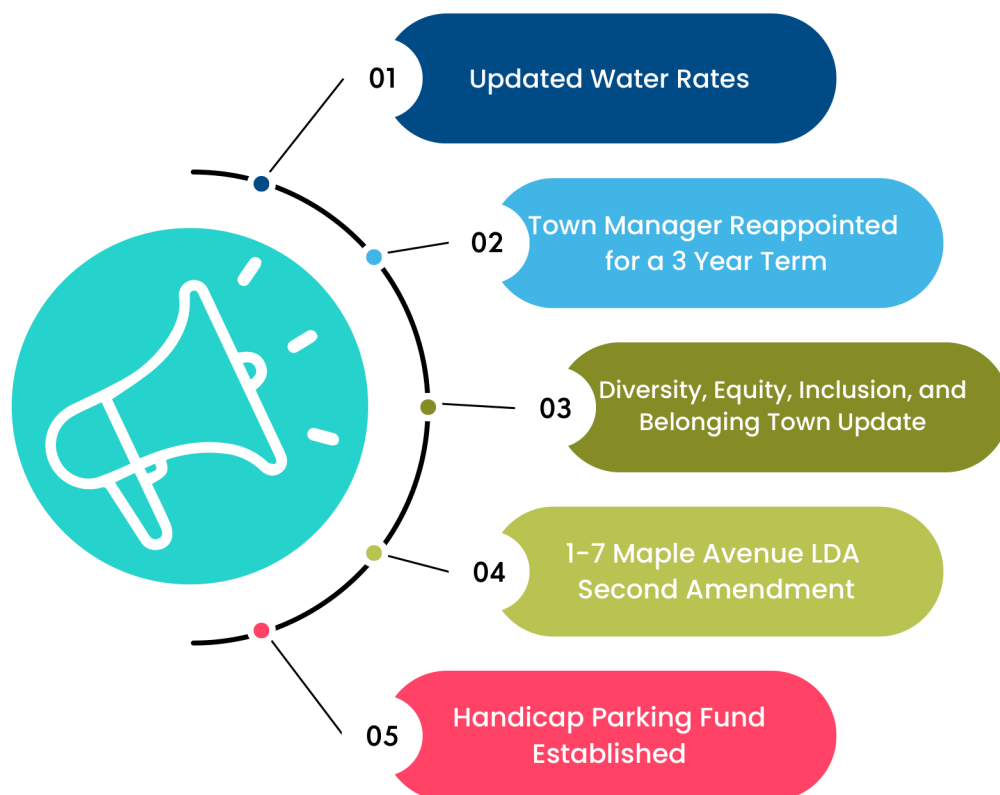
Scan the QR code to the left for more information on the Farmers Market Schedule this year.

The Farmers Market is at the Senior Center on Wednesdays, from 2:30 PM to 6:30 PM!

**Follow the Recreation Department on Facebook at Shrewsburyrec**



## Select Board Quarterly Highlights



### Updated Water Rates:

In May, the Select Board voted to adopt a new financial plan, set new water rates effective June 1, 2023, and implement a credit program for those eligible persons who have qualified for personal exemptions through the Assessor's Office, as set forth in the Water Rate Analysis and Recommendation updated April 25, 2023.

The Board held a public hearing on April 25, 2023 before implementing the new water rates.

### Town Manager Reappointed for a 3 Year Term:

At their meeting on April 25, 2023, the Select Board reappointed Kevin J. Mizikar as Town Manager for another three-year term. The Board completed Mr. Mizikar's annual review at their April 11, 2023 meeting and he received a score of Exceeds Expectations.

### Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Town Update

The Select Board received a report on work done by Town departments related to the 2021 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force Report. Updates were given on specific recommendations in the different functional areas of the report related to employment, health care, housing, public safety and the survey conducted by the Task Force. The full presentation can be found on the [Shrewsbury Media Connection YouTube Channel](#).

### 1-7 Maple Avenue LDA Second Amendment:

The Select Board Approved the Second Amendment to the 1-7 Maple Avenue Land Disposition Agreement.

The Amendment is related to the changes in the design from the Planning Board process, as well as changes in the action item dates for the project. To learn more about the project visit the project page on the [Town's Website](#) - [www.shrewsburyma.gov](http://www.shrewsburyma.gov)

### Handicap Parking Fund Established

At the Fall 2022 Special Town Meeting, an article was passed to increase handicap parking penalties from \$100 to \$300 in the Town of Shrewsbury. The article allowed for the Board to establish this fund so the Commission on Disabilities can re-appropriate the fees collected from handicap parking violations to improve accessibility in Town. At their April 11, 2023 meeting the Board unanimously approved the establishment of the fund.

### Stay in Touch with the Select Board!

The Select Board is the Town's Chief Executive Body, responsible for the community's general welfare following guidelines set forth in the Operational Policies for the Select Board and applicable law.

The day after every meeting a summary is posted of actions taken by the Board.

Visit [shrewsburyma.gov/SBUpdates](http://shrewsburyma.gov/SBUpdates) to stay connected!

The Select Board holds office hours 5:30 PM to 6:30 PM at the Town Hall the second Tuesday of every month.

The Board can be reached at [selectboard@shrewsburyma.gov](mailto:selectboard@shrewsburyma.gov)

## Meet our Staff!



**Jeff Howland**  
DPW Director

Jeff has been with the Town since June 2013. He started his local government career as the Town Engineer and then became the Town's first Department of Public Works Director in 2018.

"The best part of the job is that every day is different. When I first started this job I would make a list of everything that I needed to do that day, but as soon as the first phone call comes, the plan has to change, and that is what makes this job different and exciting."

While working in the private sector, Mr. Howland noted that our Town Hall in Shrewsbury was always an enjoyable place to be and everyone wanted to help - "not all town halls are like that." He appreciated the departmental collaboration and willingness to help each other.

He has stayed in Shrewsbury because of the great Town staff, the joy of coming to work every day, the problem solving, and the collaboration with other departments. Jeff is proud of the department's accomplishments and is looking forward to future successes to better serve the community.

## All things Public Works: The DPW Update

The Department of Public Works was formalized in Shrewsbury in 2018, and has oversight over Shrewsbury public infrastructure, including public buildings, roadways, parks, the cemetery and the water system. Director of Public Works, Jeff Howland, recently met with us to help us get to know the department better in the interview below.

### What is Public Works in Shrewsbury?

Public Works affects everyone's daily life, whether they are residents, a business, or just driving through town. Public Works is all of the essential services that make life easier, like the water you use, the roads you drive on, waste disposal, the maintenance of parks and public buildings - all fall under Public Works. The Department of Public Works serves all 38,000 plus residents and all visitors and businesses in the community.

The Department of Public Works combines the 14 different divisions that make up the Department of Public Works into one department. Mr. Howland noted that this has enhanced collaboration and coordination between the different divisions. The Department of Public Works is a dual functioning department where, "We need to be looking 10 to 15 years into the future and be proactive in providing preventative maintenance and improvements that align with the wants and needs of the community, but also reactive to the present day issues and emergencies that do arise," said Mr. Howland.

### What is Something You Want People to Know About the DPW?

"I will quote Mr. Nick Repekta, Highway Division Manager, 'we make things happen,' and I will quote Mr. Kevin Mizikar, Town Manager, 'to strive to be the best DPW in the world.'" The DPW maintains 10,000+ sewer connections, 153.61 miles of roads, 25.68 miles of sidewalk, 28 different park facilities, 19 different buildings totaling 1.1 million + square feet, and over 11,300 feet of water main.

The DPW have dedicated staff working proactively to evolve with the times to be more efficient and adjust to the needs and wants of the residents and the community. Mr. Howland noted the Department is looking at the future to drive actions now to create a vision for the DPW.

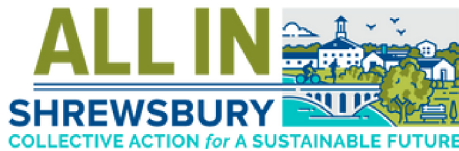


**Want to Tune into Government Meetings from Home? Visit [shrewsburymediaconnection.org](https://shrewsburymediaconnection.org) or Cable Channel 30/330 to watch live or Subscribe to Shrewsbury Media Connection on YouTube to catch up on meetings at your own convenience! Follow them on Facebook to get meeting notifications at @ShrewsburyMedia**

Stay in touch with the Department of Public Works by following the Town on Facebook – Shrewsbury Massachusetts, Twitter – @ShrewsburyMAGov, and subscribing for news alerts on the Town's website!

(508) 841-8502

[dpwsupport@shrewsburyma.gov](mailto:dpwsupport@shrewsburyma.gov)



**Coming Soon!**  
**August – September**  
**Community Feedback**  
**Opportunities on the Climate**  
**Action Plan – learn more at**  
**[shrewsburyma.gov](https://shrewsburyma.gov)**  
**[/allinshrewsbury](https://allinshrewsbury)**

### **Want to Be Added to a Monthly Email List?**

Are you interested in being added to a monthly email update list from the Town? Emails will include a digital edition of this Stay Connected Shrewsbury Pamphlet, this newsletter, and other Town Updates!

Please scan the QR Code below or fill out this [form](#) to be added to the email list or email [tgalusha@shrewsburyma.gov](mailto:tgalusha@shrewsburyma.gov)!



## **All things Public Works: The DPW Update *Continued***

### **What is going on in the DPW for this summer?**

- Continuance of the water main replacement program
- Annual roadway improvement program
- Improvements to the Walnut Street pump station
- Development of a pump station on Route 140 and Clews Street to service Route 20 from Grafton Street to Stoney Hill Road. This is part of the Route 20 Corridor Improvement Project.
- CPC funded projects located at Dean Park and Edgemere Park.
- A playground evaluation for all playgrounds
- ARPA funding allocated for park improvements like Lake Street Park, Edgemere Park, Maple Ave Fields, and pickleball courts at Coolidge

Mr. Howland noted his excitement for the ARPA-funded projects because they are projects developed from past planning that have been needed for a long time that can finally become a reality. Without this funding dedication they would probably never be able to fund these projects.

### **What are the current ongoing, long- term projects for the DPW?**

Mr. Howland added there are several ongoing projects for the DPW right now. Staff are currently working through:

- The cemetery design for the Mountain View/Prospect Park cemetery expansion
- Finalizing phase 2 of the Police Station Project, which includes the demolition of the old station, additional parking, a new driveway, and expanded functional green space (with benches etc.)
- The Shrewsbury High School driveway, Cypress Avenue, acceptance as a public way at the 2023 Annual Town Meeting
- The Multimodal Study for the Town Center
- The Climate Action and Resiliency Plan
- A Request for Proposal for an update to the Lake Street Park Master Plan based on current needs and wants of the Town
- Improvements from the Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan conducted through a grant last year
- Changes to the yard waste collection program based on a survey issued in December 2022

### **Looking Forward**

Mr. Howland noted that he is excited to connect with the community more and be more outward facing in all areas. He noted that the department has gone through a lot of changes recently, but is excited to be improving services for all residents. He added that he sees the goals of the Department of Public Works aligning with all five areas of the Strategic Plan – Engaged and Connected, Exceptional, Thriving, Prosperous, and Sustainable. He wants the Department to connect with the public more and show what their "why" is every day.

## Mail Piece Area

### Ways to Stay Connected

The Shrew is everywhere! Whether you stay in touch through print or online you can find us in your mail, in public buildings, and at:



[www.shrewsburyma.gov](http://www.shrewsburyma.gov)



@ShrewsburyMassachusetts



@ShrewsburyMAGov

### We Want to Hear From YOU!

**Do you have ideas for content for the newsletter or new ways you want to get information from the Town? Email them to Taylor Galusha at [tgalusha@shrewsburyma.gov](mailto:tgalusha@shrewsburyma.gov) today!**

**We are always looking for new ways to engage and connect with the Shrewsbury Community!**

### Check Out the Town Manager Download: A Podcast About All Things Local Government and Shrewsbury



Tune into The Town Manager Download every other Thursday to learn more about local government and talk about all things Shrewsbury! The Town Manager Download is co-hosted by Kevin Mizikar, Town Manager, and Taylor Galusha, Communications Coordinator. You can submit questions to [tmdownload@shrewsburyma.gov](mailto:tmdownload@shrewsburyma.gov) for the resident questions segment! Scan the QR Code to tune into the latest episode anywhere you get your Podcasts!



### Stay Connected Shrewsbury Webpage



Visit

<https://shrewsburyma.gov/1346/Stay-Connected-Shrewsbury> to get the latest news on meetings and events in Shrewsbury!

### From the Desk of the Select Board has a new home on the Town's Website

From the Desk of the Select Board is posted the day after the Board's Meeting highlighting actions taken by the Board in a short 35 second video. You can find current and previous updates of the Board on this site.

Please visit [Shrewsburyma.gov/SBUpdates](http://Shrewsburyma.gov/SBUpdates) to see all previous editions of From the Desk of the Select Board and Subscribe to Select Board News Flashes at [Shrewsburyma.gov/TownUpdates](http://Shrewsburyma.gov/TownUpdates) to receive notifications directly to your Phone or Email!



**Stay Up to Date with the Shrew on the Go!  
Download the ShrewsburyMA Mobile App on the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store Today!**